(b) whether these petrol pumps are sufficient to meet the present requirement of transport in Uttaranchal; and

(c) if not, the number of petrol pumps required in this State and by when the remaining petrol pumps shall be set-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) As on 1-4-2003, there were 218 retail outlets dealerships (petrol pumps) in operation in the State of Uttaranchal.

(b) and (c) The Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) conduct surveys in various parts of the country, including in the State of Uttaranchal, to identify locations where economically viable retail outlet dealerships can be set up. While doing so, the requirement of the transportation fuels at the location surveyed is taken into account.

After the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism in the petroleum sector with effect from 1-4-2002, the public sector OMCs have freedom to set up retail outlet dealerships as per the requirements and commercial viability.

Compulsory sale of Gasohol

2960. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several sugarcane-producing States were slow on creating infrastructure for producing ethanol by forcing the Central Government to extend the deadline for the compulsory sale of gasohol for another three months; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response thereto and the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government held review meetings with State Governments/oil companies and in order to facilitate completion of setting up of anhydrous ethanol manufacturing capacities, extended the deadline for covering all the areas of the notified 9 States and 4 Union Territories from 30-6-2003 to 30-9-2003. State Governments have also been requested

to remove bottlenecks in setting up of ethanol projects, to simplify excise procedures and to reduce State levies on sale, import/export of ethanol.

Supply of underweight gas cylinders

2961. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some gas agencies are supplying underweight gas cylinders to the consumers and a number of complaints have been submitted in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof giving names of the agencies against whom complaints have been received; and

(c) what action has been taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have received 88 established complaints relating to supply of underweight cylinders against their distributors during the year 2002-2003 and April-June, 2003. OMCs have taken necessary action against the erring distributors on the establishment of complaint in terms of Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2001.

Sale of underweight petrol by petrol pumps

†2962. DR. AKHTAR HASAN RIZVI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that petrol pumps sell underweight quantity of oil to customers;

(b) if so, the action taken against the petrol pump owners so far; and

(c) whether any scheme has been formulated with a view to providing full quantity of oil to customers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b)

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.